-THE-



-OF THE-

TWELFTH ANNUAL SESSION

-OF THE-

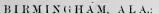
MUD CREEK BAPTIST ASSOCIATION,

+ HELD WITH +

OAK GROVE CHURCH.

JEFFERSON COUNTY, ALA.,

OCTOBER 18th, 19th, 20th and 21st, 1883.



Roberts & son, printers, binders and blank-book manufacturers. $1\,8\,8\,4\,.$



MINUTES.

OF THE TWELFTH ANNUAL SESSION OF THE MUD CREEK BAPTIST ASSOCIATION.

FIRST DAY—OPENING SESSION.

OAK GROVE, ALA., October 13, 1883.

The delegates to the Twelfth Annual Session of the Mud Creek Baptist Association from the various churches composing the association convened with Oak Grove Baptist Church on this day (Thursday) at 12 o'clock m.

The introductory sermon was preached by the Rev. J. I. GILBERT, from the 8th chapter and 30th verse of Paul's Epistle to the Romans, after which the assembly adjourned one hour for dinner.

AFTERNOON SESSION.

The delegates reassembled in the church at 3 o'clock p.m., and were called to order by the former Moderator, a hymn was sung and prayer offered by the Moderator.

The roll of churches was called and the delegates brought forward their letters from the several churches represented, and the assembly then proceeded to ballot for a Moderator and Clerk. Elder T. A. Norwood was elected Moderator and T. M. Parsons Clerk, and, on motion, Brother J. M. Hych was appointed to assist the clerk in reading the letters.*

^{*} A complete roll of the delegates appears in the tabula statement on the last page of these Minutes.

The Moderator appointed Brothers A. J. Smith, S. A. Parsons, T. J. Burchfield, and the Deacons of Oak Grove Church a Committee on Devotion. On motion the body then adjourned until 9 o'clock Friday morning.

SECOND DAY—MORNING SESSION.

The body was called to order at 9 o'clock a.m. by the Moderator; a hymn was sung and prayer offered by Brother C. F. Allman.

On motion, all visiting ministers were invited to a seat in the body.

CALL FOR CORRESPONDENCE.

From Canaan—R. E. HUEY, S. T. HUEY, M. M. WOOD, R. Y. ROBERTSON.

From Harmony—M. J. Parsons, Thos. Willard.
RETURNED CORRESPONDENCE.

To Canaan—T. M. Parsons, A. J. Smith, J. A. Markham, J. M. Knight, T. A. Norwood, J. N. McFall, J. I. Gilbert.

North River—J. M. Hych, J. M. Kent, J. I. Gilbert, W. P. Salter, R. F. Vines, J. M. Knight.

Harmony—B. S. Thompson, J. A. Markham, T. A. Norwood, J. M. Gilbert, Wm. Burchfield.

Tuscaloosa—B. S. Thompson, J. A. Markham, S. A. Parsons, Wm. Burchfield.

Mulberry-J. A. MARKHAM.

DELEGATES TO THE STATE CONVENTION.

T. A. Norwood, B. S. Thompson, T. M. Parsons, J. M. Kent, M. M. Gwinn, A. J. Smith, S. A. Parsons.

The Constitution, Abstract of Faith and the Rules of Decorum were read, after which, the following committees were appointed:

On Documents—J. M. Kent, J. I. Gilbert and P. A. Wilkey.

On Nominations—J. M. Hych, J. M. Gilbert, Thos. Burchfield.

On Finance—T. L. Burchfield, W. P. Salter, T. M. Norwood.

On Home and Foreign Missions—B.S. Thompson, T.M. Parsons, J. M. Hych.

On Temperance—B. S. Thompson, J. H. Batson, C. F. Allman. Adjourned.

EVENING SESSION.

The body was called to order by the Moderator; a hymn was sung, and prayer was offered by J. N. McFall.

On motion, the original report on education was adopted.

The following named brethren were then appointed a Committee on Deceased Members: C. F. ALLMAN, M. M. GWINN, J. A. MARKHAM.

On motion, Bro. M. M. Gwinn was appointed Treasurer for the ensuing year.

On motion, the query sent out from Mud Creek Church was taken up for discussion. The discussion was opened Bro. J. A. MARKHAM. After the discussion was closed the following resolution was offered by Bro. B. S. Thompson:

Resolved, That any male member of our church who will not contribute to the support of the gospel, who refuses to bear his equal part in all the necessary expenses to promote the kingdom of Christ on earth, should be labored with to get him to see and do his duty, and if failing, the church should deal with such case according to its merits. Adopted.

On motion, the body adjourned until 9 o'clock Saturday morning.

THIRD DAY—MORNING SESSION.

The body was called to order by the Moderator; a hymn was sung and prayer was offered by Bro. G. B. Vines. The roll of delegates was then called and the absentees marked, after which the minutes of the previous meetings were read and approved.

On motion the circular letter written two years ago was returned to Bro. B. S. Thompson.

COMMITTEE REPORTS.

On Documents.—We, your Committee, beg leave to report that we have carefully examined the letters from the several churches here represented. We find that Smithville Church requests that the next meeting of this association be held there. We find that Mud Creek Church has kept up Sabbath school and prayer meetings three Sundays in each month. These Sabbath schools have been supervised by Bro. S. A. Parsons, and have been attended by an average of about thirty-five pupils to each school. Mud Creek Church also requests that the next meeting of this association be held there. [The query, "Have we a scriptural right to compromise with members of the church who can contribute to the support of the gospel and will not do so," having been taken up by the body ahead of our report, we admit advice in the case.] We find that Oak Grove Church has a regular Sabbath' school, in a prosperous condition. We recommend that the association hear the circular letter written by Bro. C. F. Allman, and dispose of it as the body may think proper.

J. M. KENT, Chairman.

On Deceased Members,—We, your Committee, find that since the last annual meeting of this association its members have been made to feel the loss of Eld. W. C. Howton, Bro. Jonathan Howton, Sister Trayls, Sister Hannah, Sister Patterson, and Sister Lawson, all of whom were distinguished members of this association. We sincerely mourn their loss, though we cannot wish them back with us; but we would admonish one another to run with patience the race that is left before us, that we may meet them in that upper and better kingdom, where we will part no more; and we would ask God to help us mourn with those that mourn their loss.

C. F. ALLMAN, Chairman.

On Temperance. We, your Committee, beg leave to report as follows: 1st—that the several churches of this body use all their influence against the great evil of intemperance, and withdraw from any brother who uses intoxicating liquors as a beverage; 2d—that we further recommend that

the several churches composing this association be instructed through their pastors to use all their influence to secure the passage of a law prohibiting the sale of intoxicating liquid throughout Alabama.

B. S. THOMPSON, Chairman.

On Home and Foreign Missions.—This committee asked the association to adopt the report of last year's committee, with the following amendment: "That we shall correspond with the State Mission Board instead of sending out an itenerant from the board of this association."

On motion, all of the above reports and recommendations were adopted.

On motion, the circular letter of Bro. C. F. ALLMAN was read before the body, and after considerable discussion was ordered spread upon the minutes of the association. The body then adjourned till the afternoon.

EVENING SESSION.

The body was called to order by the Moderator; a hymn was sung and prayer was offered by Bro. W. C. GILMER.

On motion, the report of Bro. B. S. Thompson on Missionary Labor was read, as follows:

REPORT ON MISSIONARY LABOR.

To the Mud Creek Baptist Association:

DEAR BRETHREN-As your humble servant, I beg leave to submit the following report of my itineracy: I traveled 1036 miles, preached 108 sermons, visited 82 families, lectured at three day schools, and appointed Sunday school superintendents at Warrior River Church, Liberty Church, Antioch Church, Friendship Church, and at a school in the neighborhood of Mr. Riley Wallace, this side of the Warrior River, and near the foot of the Squaw Shoals. There are also Sabbath schools at Oak Grove and Mud Creek Churches, and the good brethren there are doing their duty. I attended a protracted meeting at Prude's Creek Church, of which Bro. J. I. Gilbert is pastor. During this meeting 25 accessions were made to the church. I also attended a meeting at Warrior Church, where five accessions were made to the church; and also another protracted meeting at Cottondale Church (Bro. J. Hosmer, pastor) where 30 accessions were made to the church. Not much was then being done in that section for the Sabbath school cause, on account of measels, mumps, and other complaints, prevalent among the people. I also assisted in the ordaination of three deacons. There is an opening for the construction of a church

near Mr. Riley Wallace's place, where the Sabbath school spoken of above is located. By preaching one sermon on the subject of Missionary Labor, I have faithfully discharged the duties assigned me by your association, to the best of my ability, and if there is a dissenting voice against the course I have pursued, I am not aware of it.

N. B. -1 was engaged in the above mentioned labors 181 days—making six months and one day, for which I have received from Mud Creek \$11.05 and from other sources \$1.75—a total of \$12.80.

B. S. THOMPSON.

On motion, Bro. Thompson's report was received and duly recorded, and the Moderator then appointed the following named brethren a committee to correspond with the State Mission Board: J. I. Gilbert, P. A. Wilkey and M. M. Gwinn.

On motion, the report of the Treasurer was also read and duly received.

A motion also prevailed that the writing of circular letters be discontinued for the present.

ADDITIONAL COMMITTEE REPORTS.

On Finance.—We, your Committee, beg leave to report that after an examination of the amounts sent up from the several churches here represented, we find the sum of \$25.80 for minutes and association purposes.

T. L. BURCHFIELD, Chairman.

On Nominations.—We, your Committee, beg leave to report that we find requests from both Mud Creek and Smithville Churches asking that the next session of this association be held with them, and we recommend that our next session be held with Smithville Church, commencing on Thursday before the third Sunday in October, IS84, and that the introductory sermon on that occasion be preached by Eld. J. N. McFall, with Eld. J. 1. Gilbert as alternate, and the missionary sermon by Eld. T. A. Norwood, with Eld. J. A. Markham as alternate.

J. M. KNIGHT, Chairman.

On Sabbath Schools.— We, your Committee, beg leave to report that we find, 1st—a dominant idea that Sabbath schools are designed for the instruction of children only; 2d—that there in an inefficiency among the teachers; 3d—that there is a lack of proper financial support for the schools; 4th—that many of our churches hold only mouthly meetings. We respectfully make the following suggestions as to how these causes

may be removed: 1st we are agreed that it will be a sad day when our church members generally shall conclude that they have graduated in Bible study, and that the most learned as well as the most ignorant of them may improve themselves and increase their efficiency as Christian workers by an earnest, social study of God's word; and as the Sabbath school offers better facilities for this social study and improvement than any other meeting held by our church, all members not prevented by more urgent duties, should engage in Sabbath school work for their own personal benefit. And, admitting that the prime object of the Sabbath school is to instruct and interest children in religious matters, it is agreed that this end can best be accomplished by the active co-operation of the adult members, because children take great interest in and value most those things which engage the earnest attention of their parents and adult friends. If the father love and talks of horses, dogs and guns, the son will love and talk of them; if the mother is wrapped up in fashions and dress, or theaters and ball-rooms, the daughter will love those things also. If parents and adults generally will regularly attend the Sabbath school, the attendance of children will largely increase, and if our older members will give themselves much to the study of Sabbath school work the cause of Christ will be greatly enhanced. To accomplish this end we recommend that our churches be urged to impress the duty and necessity of this work upon their members, that they may guide and train the youthful minds and hearts of the younger Christians and children, and imbue them with the ennobling and beautifying sentiments of Godly life. To do this we need gray hairs in the Sabbath schools to dignify the work.

S. A. PARSONS, Chairman,

On motion, the above committee reports were adopted by the body and duly recorded.

A motion prevailed to strike out the 14th article of the constitution of the association, and to amend the 6th article of the same so as to read as follows: "Any church in this association may be represented at its annual sessions by a written communication specifying the state of the church since the last session of this body and the names of its messengers to the same."

On motion, the following resolutions were then offered and adopted by the association:

Resolved, 1. That this association recommend the several churches com-

posing its body to send up in their several letters a full report of their receipts and disbursements during the year, and for what purposes.

2. That the thanks of this body be tendered to the brethren and sisters of Oak Grove Church and its community generally for the very kind and hospitable manner in which they have entertained us during the present session of the association.

T. A. NORWOOD, Moderator.

T. M. PARSONS, Clerk.

On Sunday the missionary sermon was preached by Eld. M. M. WOOD, from the 8th chapter and the latter clause of the 9th verse of Paul's Epistle to the Romans, after which a collection amounting to \$17.60 was taken up and ordered sent to the State Mission Board.

T. M. PARSONS, Clerk.



APPENDIX.

CIRCULAR LETTER.

Subject-Daniel, 5th Chapter and 27th Verse.

"Thou art weighed in a balance, and art found wanting." This was the interpretation of the handwriting upon the wall of King Belshazzar's palace, where he had made a great feast to a thousand of his lords. He had taken the vesse's from the holy temple at Jerusalem for use at this impious feast, and in this way God chose to make him quake and tremble for his bad conduct. And to-day, brethren, if we were to look well to our conduct in every sense, our very knees would be knocking together. Therefore, watch and pray, and be full of good works, although good works (which are the fruit of faith and follow after justification) cannot put away our sins and withstand the severity of God's judgment. Yet, they are pleasing and acceptable to God through Christ, and spring out of a true and lively faith, inasmuch as a true and lively faith may be as evidently known as a tree is discerned by its fruits.

The propositions contained in this subject are these-Good works cannot put away sin, or endure the severity of God's judgment, yet are they acceptable to God in Christ. They are acceptable because of the merit of Christ, and not because of any merit in themselves. And they spring from a true and lively faith; but they cannot put away our sins, because they cannot atone for them. The atonement of Christ is the only atonement-the only medium of pardon. Acts 4:12-" Neither is their salvation in any other, for there is none other name given under heaven whereby we may be saved." Good works cannot endure the severity of God's judgment because they are not perfect; they are pleasing to God because He has commanded them to be done, and because by them a lively faith may be as evidently known as a tree is discerned by its fruit. Hence all Christians are exhorted to good works: Matt. 5:16-"Let your light so shine before men, that others seeing your good works, shall glorify your father, which is in heaven." Now, it is evident that if good works glorify God, they are pleasing and acceptable to Him. It is for this very purpose that we are justified. Eph. 2:10-"For we are His workmanship, created in Christ unto good works." As has been said, good works are signs of an inward faith, and to keep in an active state and exert a good

influence upon each other, is the duty of every Christian. Titus 3:8-"These I will, that thou affirm constantly that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable unto men." These two passages show the reason why good works are pleasing to God. The new creation consequent upon a belief in God admits them into the Church of Christ, and hence their persons and their services are acceptable to God through Christ. works done in obedience to God's command are the fruits and evidences of a true and living faith; and by them believers manifest their thankfulness, etrengthen their assurance, edify their brethren, and adorn the profession of the gospel; thus they stop the mouths of their adversaries, and glorify God, whose workmanship they are, created in Christ—thereunto, that having their faith unto holiness, they may have in the end eternal life. To understand this aright, we must ascertain what constitutes the quality of a good work and determines its real character. It is certainly the new creation of the soul in Christ Jesus unto good works. This directs and sanctifies the motives, and gives quality and character to the action. Two actions may be performed by different persons, and may be the same so far as the outward action in itself is concerned—vet. one may be good and the other bad. The case of the Publican and the Pharisee will illustrate this thought. They both performed the same act outwardly—they prayed. But these acts were very different in character. The motive of the Publican was good, therefore his act was good; but the motive of the Pharisee was evil, therefore his act was evil. The quality of on action that is good is produced by the motive to glorify God. If the actuating motive is changed, as it always is in regeneration, then the same act that once had no good quality in it becomes a good work, because it is done with a good motive. It springs from a true and lively faith, and this faith is established in the heart by the Holy Ghost. Then if the heart is right, and is governed by the law of God, the work may be called good. Luke 6:45 - "A good man, out of the good treasures of his heart, bringeth forth that which is good; and an evil man, out of the evil treasures of his heart, bringeth forth that which is evil; for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh."

We must admit, then, that there is good works, and that they proceed from a good heart. But this admission does not elevate them to a condition or term of pardon. They cannot put away sin. There is no element of an extra character in them, nor can they be regarded in any sense or degree as a substitute for a pure heart, in the case of a regenerated man, who alone can perform a good work without faith. Heb. 11:6—"For without faith it is imposfible to please God." By good works Christians show their thankfulness to God for his goodness and mercy to them. Psa. 100:12-13—"What shall I render unto the Lord for all His benefits towards me; I will take the cup of salvation and call upon the name of the Lord." Good work stengthens the believer's confidence in God, and

his assurance of Christian Iove. I. John 2:5-" But whosoever keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God." And again in the same book and chapter—third verse, we read: "Hereby we do know that we know Him if we keep his commandments." Good works adorn Christian life and clorify God. Matt. 5:16 -" Let you light so shine before men that they, seeing your good works, shall glorify the father which is in heaven." Good work is the fruit of holiness, and anticipates eternal life. Eph. 14:10—"For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained, that we should walk in them." Rom. 6:22—"But now, being made free from sin and become the servants of God, ye have your fruit unto holiness and in the end everlasting life," The above passages certainly establishes the value of good works. Such is the connection between Christian good works and eternal salvation that one depends upon the other, although it is true that salvation must consist in an entire renovation of the soul, and that this is the gift of God through faith, and cannot be merited by good works, while at the same time it is the uniform testimony of the Bible that the blessing of eternal salvation may be forfeited by an omission of good works; so it is clear that good works are necessary to the continuation and progress of a renovating grace in the Christian heart, and as a consequence, to a reward of eternal life beyond the grave.

The happiness of the soul consists in rewards and other proofs of divine favor, as peace with God and joy in the Holy Ghost, with the promise and positive assurance of a future life. But these rewards, whether bestowed in this life or the life to come, cannot be merited by good works in themselves, any more than the pardon of sin, but faith and good works connected with it are the conditions alone upon which these rewards are bestowed, and the degree of reward is regulated by the degree of zeal and holiness, which is exhibited by obedience to the law of God, and which is as essentially a part of true faith as trust in God through Christ. We therefore conclude that good works are as essential to the attainment of eternal life as are the conditions of faith, though they are not to be regarded as in any degree meritorious in procuring the grace necessary for this final blessing. Hence, we have this testimony, that Christ hath declared that not they only who profess His religion but they who do the work which He has commanded shall be saved. It is clear, then, that good works are essential to our entrance into heaven, and though they do not merit this ultimate blessing, yet they are necessary to all who shall become heirs to the grace of life eternal, "for as ye are made free from sin ye shall have the fruit unto holiness, and in the end life everlasting." The doctrine here set forth is of great practical vrlue to every Christian. Among other things, it teaches us that there is but one method of salvation, and but one class of conditions upon which this salvation may be obtained, and on this account "thou art weighed in a balance and round wanting." It also teaches that if there is a settled desire to do that which

God has commanded, and thereby to glorify Him, it is an evidence that the soul is under the influence and direction of the Holy Spirit, as the desire to do the will of God is not natural, and if it exists to any degree at all, it exists only as an offspring of the grace of God. It is therefore clearly evident that mankind in the ordinary state of existence does not possess a disposition to do the will of God. Rom. 8:7—"Because the casual mind is at enmity against God; but the disposition to do right actions is peculiar to the man of God, and by this he knows he has passed into the new or spiritual state, and can rejoice in this conformity as far as it goes to the divine will."

This doctrine should impress every Christian with the duty of doing good to all men. It embraces Paul's advice to the Galations, 6:10-"As we have, therefore, opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith," This duty is limited by no circumstance save the absence of opportunity. "Thou art weighed in a balance and art found wanting." If there be no occasion for good work toward others, the disposition of course will still remain in the heart, if so it follows that when a believer is not inclined to do that which is good, he has reason to suppose that all is not right within. Good works are the signs of that faith which purifies the heart, and there is no good work, however small, that loses its reward. Mark 9:41—"For whosoever shall give you a cup of water to drink in my name, because ve belong to Christ verily I say unto you, he shall not lose his reward." The good works that God has commanded us to do all lead us to practice the faith that prompts a good action. James 2:22-"Seeist thou how faith wrought with His works, and by His works was faith made perfect."



STATISTICAL TABLE.

PASTORS. POSTOFFI B. S. Thompson Jonesbore T. A. Norwood Hayes Hayes J. F. Price Toadvine J. N. McFall Wetona J. N. McFall Hayes J. I. (filbert Short Cre A. White Short Cre J. I. (filbert Toadvine M. J. Herry. McCalla	
NAMES OF DELEGATES. (Absentees in Italic.) W.T. Narimore, A. J. Johnston, J. M. Kent, J. Miner J. N. McFall, J. W. McFall, J. E. Parsons, J. W. Parsons, I. J. Burchfield, W. Scales, B. Hych, H. P. Hutson C. F. Allman, A. J. Smith, J. M. Hych, W. C. Gilmer J. Markham, T. M. Parsons, S. A. Parsons, D. A. Howton C. Johnston C. Johnston, B. S. Thompson, B. B. Gwinn, J. Harwell, J. A. Howton J. I. Gilbert, T. L. Burchfield, J. M. Gilbert, J. M. Gwinn, J. H. Gilbert, J. M. Gwinn, J. M. Knight, P. A. Wilkey, M. M. Gwinn, J. H. Batson J. M. Knight, P. A. Wilkey, M. M. Gwinn, J. H. Batson R. J. Sellers, S. Sellers, J. H. Lawson, N. J. Armstrong	heaptiged.
dinhip	Rec'd by
- : : : : : : : : : : : : : : : : : : :	Deceased.

